

# ecoNews — Wire —

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

**April 10, 2003**

For immediate release

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## **DNR USES EMERGENCY PLAN TO HELP DAIRY PRODUCER LOCATE BURIAL SITE FOR COWS**

MANCHESTER – Dubuque County dairy producer Randy Riniker asked the DNR for technical help after a Tuesday morning fire destroyed 60 dairy cows and his dairy barn located approximately three miles northwest of Luxemburg.

Riniker asked the DNR Manchester field office Tuesday for information on state requirements for dead animal disposal. He was concerned about the disposal of the dead cows as he did not want to impact White Pine Hollow, a state preserve.

“Rendering or a landfill would be the first choice for animal disposal in a situation like this, but the rendering plant would not accept the animals because they were so badly burned,” said Mike Wade, environmental specialist at the DNR Manchester field office.

It’s important to bury the animals quickly and to put them in an area that will prevent nutrients, organic matter and any pathogens from getting into the drinking water or a stream, said Bob Libra, DNR geologist.

This area of northeast Iowa has shallow rock areas with rock outcrops and sinkholes, where groundwater contamination can be a real concern, Libra added.

Due to the geology and topography in this area of Dubuque County, there are very few sites that meet all DNR criteria for mass burial sites. Fortunately Riniker owns land near the burn site that can be used for the burial of his dead livestock, said Wade.

Wade and other DNR specialists were able to identify suitable burial sites for Riniker using a state emergency plan developed in 2001 after the outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease in Britain.

The maps were developed to identify potential sites for mass burials, said Kathy Lee, DNR emergency response specialist. They provide an objective, scientifically based method for determining where and how many animals can be buried, she added.

“It’s a tremendous benefit to us to get these maps,” said Wade. “These maps allow us to quickly identify sites that meet the criteria for mass burial of livestock and take any guesswork out of the selection process.”

Riniker and Wade used the maps to locate ridge tops with deep soil deposits that could accommodate the 105 by 6-foot deep trench needed to bury the dairy cows.

“We were able to compare the emergency maps with a color infrared aerial photo and match up landmarks on Riniker’s farm to identify areas on his land where he could bury the animals,” Wade said.

Wade added that Riniker will have to contact One-Call to locate any buried utilities and then field verify the soil depth at the site.

In a non-emergency situation, state rules limit animal burials to seven cattle or 44 swine per acre per year. The bottom of all burial trenches must be at least two feet above the seasonal high water table level and be covered by at least 30 inches of soil. Trenches must be located from 50 to 100 feet from wells and surface waters and at least 500 feet from existing neighbors’ residences.

Other non-emergency options include rendering plants, landfills, incineration and composting.

**For more information, contact Mike Wade at 563-927-2640.**

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## **ADM FACILITIES IN IOWA TO CUT EMISSIONS UNDER FEDERAL SETTLEMENT**

DES MOINES—The U.S. Department of Justice and Environmental Protection Agency announced Wednesday a landmark settlement with Archer Daniels Midland Company (ADM) covering operations at 52 plants in 16 states, including installing air pollution control improvements at plants Cedar Rapids, Clinton, and Des Moines.

The Department of Natural Resources and Iowa Attorney General’s Office participated extensively in the federal settlement, which was conducted with numerous state and local air pollution agencies over the last 20 months.

“This is a landmark settlement that will reduce over 23,000 tons of emissions in Iowa alone,” said Chuck Corell, the DNR’s lead participant and supervisor of the air compliance section.

He said emission reductions will phase in over ten years at ADM facilities in Cedar Rapids, Clinton and Des Moines. The smaller Keokuk facility will not require additional controls. Clinton air quality will benefit the most, with nearly 15,000 tons of annual reductions primarily from cuts in sulfur dioxide, a contributor to acid rain, and volatile organic compounds, linked to smog formation.

“The agreement will cut 7,600 tons of smog-forming volatile organic compounds from Iowa skies,” said Corell. “For perspective, Iowa’s top 11 emitters combined emit that amount of volatile organics.”

Under the federal settlement, ADM will make environmental improvements to eliminate at least 63,000 tons of emissions a year nationally including nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, particulate matter, volatile organic compounds and hazardous air pollutants. ADM will install state-of-the-art controls on a large number of units, shut down some older, dirtier units and take emission limits on others.

The Department of Justice and plaintiffs alleged that ADM failed to estimate emissions from hundreds of processes and expanded others without installing required air pollution technology under New Source Review and Prevention of Significant Deterioration requirements under the Clean Air Act.

The settlement includes a civil penalty of \$4.6 million and ADM agreed to spend \$6.3 million on supplemental environmental projects to retrofit diesel engines in school buses as part of the settlement, according to officials at the U.S. Department of Justice. The pollution control costs are estimated at \$340 million over ten years nationwide.

**For more information, contact Brian Button at (515) 281-7832.**

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## **STATE AGENCIES CONCERNED ABOUT OPEN BURNING**

Des Moines — Cautions against open burning this spring were issued today by the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Public Health because of risks to persons with respiratory disease and concerns about toxic substances.

Smoke from open burning can irritate the conditions of some people with asthma, said an official with the Iowa Department of Public Health. “Since lung problems such as asthma are common,” said Dr. Thomas Boo, a federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention epidemiologist assigned to the state public health department, “open burning is a public health concern.”

“Smoke contains microscopic soot particles that can damage lung tissue, send asthmatics to hospitals and create odor and haze nuisances,” said Brian Button, air information specialist with the DNR. Smoke can create local air pollution levels much higher than all auto and industrial emissions combined.

Button urged people to first consider cleaner, safer disposal options such as composting, mulching, recycling or municipal waste disposal instead of burning.

He said several communities have recently enacted bans on garbage and leaf burning due to health concerns.

**Iowans can learn more about air quality at [www.iowacleanair.com](http://www.iowacleanair.com) and asthma at [www.idph.state.ia.us/hppab](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/hppab). For more information, contact Brian Button at (515) 281-7832.**

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## **SMOG SEASON IN SWING**

DES MOINES — The nation’s smog season has begun, the time of year when air pollution agencies across the nation, including Iowa’s Department of Natural Resources, turn on equipment to monitor ground-level ozone, a key pollutant found in smog.

“The state has 13 ozone monitors across Iowa that run April 1 to October 31 -- the time of year when warm temperatures and strong sunlight can cook emissions from vehicles and factories and fumes from paints and chemicals to form ozone smog,” said Brian Button, DNR air information specialist.

He said summer smog levels can make air quality unhealthy for certain groups of people such as children and asthmatics if those people are out-of-doors for long periods of time while exerting themselves.

He said Iowa’s air quality meets federal health standards for ozone, but areas of the state are pushing the standards. “Extreme eastern and western Iowa is at 92 percent of the allowed standard. Pollution increases could push us over the federal standards and additional regulations would be required.” Button said much work is going on at the state and federal level to help maintain air quality and prevent such an occurrence.

“Iowa’s air is still much better than many areas of the nation where unhealthy air is routine and at levels much higher than what we occasionally have in Iowa.” He said our clean air status saves Iowans millions of dollars annually in reduced health care and regulatory costs.

**Iowans can view current air quality data and learn more about air quality at [www.iowacleanair.com](http://www.iowacleanair.com). For more information, contact Brian Button at (515) 281-7832.**